

## Radio tips

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### When the call comes

#### Ask for details

- What program is it for?
- Do they want an interview or a quick 'grab' for news?
- Will it be pre-recorded or live to air?
- Will it be over the phone or do you need to come to the studio?
- What will the angle of the story/ line of questioning be?
- What is their deadline?

#### Brief yourself as well as possible

- Play for time if you can and if you need to – say you'll ring back and spend a little time thinking about how you will express the ideas you want to get across – simple is best
- Do some quick research about the program you are being interviewed for, their style and their audience
- If you're being asked to comment on an issue currently in the news, do an online news search to find out what else has been said on the topic

#### Fit your message to the medium

- If a grab is all they want, think of a snappy way to sum up your message
- For a longer interview, remember radio is an intimate medium – it should come across as a personal conversation between you and the interviewer

### Once you're on air

- Think friendly and authoritative
- Remember the audience and tell them what it means for them – their health, their family, their future – science needs to be put in context. Imagine you are explaining it to someone at a cocktail party
- Keep answers reasonably concise – don't be afraid of silence when you feel you've said your piece
- Say what you do know and leave it at that – hedging and qualifying academic style makes boring radio

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## Once you're on air

### (Continued)

- Forget your peers – thinking of what they might be thinking will inhibit you and make you lapse into 'scientific speak'
- Use everyday language not jargon – remember you're explaining to someone who may know nothing about your topic. A simple explanation of a difficult concept is gold to the media
- Have some examples ready – radio loves a story
- If you're being interviewed by phone and you're in a remote or interesting location, describe it. With radio you must be the audience's eyes.
- Let your energy and passion for your subject show – a lively voice is what radio wants. Never read or memorise
- Smile – it will make your voice much more engaging to the listener and will help kill nerves
- Be honest – if you don't know the answer, say so
- Enjoy yourself

## After it's all over

- Avoid the natural tendency to cringe and think of all the things you forgot to say
- Remember what went well
- Ask for feedback from the interviewer/friends/colleagues
- Listen back – and you'll be even better next time